

needs against appropriate environmental protections. Under current law, fringe groups are allowed to—for the cost of a postage stamp—file lawsuits against any infrastructure project needing a Clean Water Permit that they spot in the Federal Register. These lawsuits, and the fear of them, have stopped numerous projects that were necessary for local governments to protect their constituents and would have caused minimal harm to the environment. My legislation would modernize the application process for CWA permits submitted by local governments that are for levees, self-closing flood barriers, seawalls, flood gates, slough and stream construction and dredging for flood control, retention ponds for residential areas, and roads and bridges for hurricane, wildfire, and other extreme weather event evacuations. It creates firm time limits for the Corps to act, and a petition process should the agency be unwilling to complete consideration of the project. The legislation also caps mitigation costs to being no more than twenty percent of the total project's cost to ensure projects costs are responsible to the taxpayer. This legislation does not waive NEPA and protects practical environmental review. With local governments struggling to allocate scarce taxpayer dollars for badly needed public safety projects, we must ensure the Federal Government properly balances public safety and environmental concerns. I look forward to working with my colleagues to move this legislation through Congress.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 630 on H.R. 3521—The Department of Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Lease Authorization Act of 2013, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 631 on H.R. 1402—VA Expiring Authorities Extension Act of 2013, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 632 on H.R. 2019—Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act of 2013, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present I would have voted “nay.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 633 on H.R. 2319—Native American Veterans' Memorial Amendments Act of 2013, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 634 on S. 1471—Alicia Dawn Koehl Respect for National Cemeteries Act, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 635 on H.R. 3212—Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2013, I am not recorded because I was absent

due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 636 on H.R. 1992—Israel QME Enhancement Act, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present I would have voted “aye.”

HONORING BOLTON FUNERAL HOME

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a landmark establishment within the Bolton community, the Bolton Funeral Home.

The Bolton Funeral Home came into existence with a vision and endearing motivation to provide burial services for African Americans living within rural areas of Hinds County, Mississippi. On August 15, 1946, Mr. Walter Robinson, Sr. and Mr. Wren Walton purchased a parcel of land within the city limits of Bolton, Mississippi from Jennie Klingman. The purchasing price was \$450.00, which was paid in cash. The funeral home was constructed and opened for business in November 1946. During that time, the average cost for burial services through the Bolton funeral home was approximately \$300.00.

During the time of legalized segregation, the Bolton Funeral Home became an essential business for many in the African American community seeking to bury their loved ones. At the time, the nearest African American owned funeral homes were located in Jackson, Mississippi. With the establishment of the Bolton Funeral Home, those living within the rural communities surrounding the town of Bolton were granted closer access to a very important and much needed service.

Upon the passing of the Mr. Wren Walton and Mr. Walter Robinson, Sr., the Bolton Funeral Home was inherited by Mr. Lewis Kinney (nephew of Mr. Wren Walton) and Mrs. Ruth J. Robinson (wife of Mr. Walter Robinson, Sr.). Today, the business is operated by Mr. Willie Earl Robinson, Walter L. Robinson, Jr., Yvonne Robinson, and Minnie P. Robinson.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Bolton Funeral Home for providing burial services for African Americans during a period of legal segregation and, often times, isolation from such services.

BUSINESSES SHOULDN'T HAVE TO PLAY DEFENSE AGAINST FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

HON. RANDY HULTGREN

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to draw attention to the regulatory war being waged by this administration on American families, individuals, small businesses, states, cities and towns.

The administration has developed a bad habit of making endless rules and regulations,

with little regard for their negative effects on Americans.

From writing confusing tax forms, to mandating what type of water comes out of fire hydrants, the vast bureaucratic machine in Washington delights in determining how Americans should live and work.

The exponential increase of government rules and regulations poses a clear threat to our freedom, for instance, the freedom of individuals to start their own businesses and pursue the American Dream.

But there is a solution.

I have introduced H.R. 309, the Regulatory Sunset and Review Act of 2013, to break this terrible habit.

I believe that reforms are needed to halt this administration's practice of regulating beyond the intent of the laws we pass, and to reduce the burden these regulations place on Americans, especially American businesses.

Before talking more about the solution, allow me to more fully illustrate the problem and its impact on growing jobs and the economy.

Now, not all regulation is bad, and businesses are more than willing to follow commonsense regulations.

The U.S. Grade Standards for fruits and vegetables, for instance, makes sense for grocers by defining the quality standards for fresh produce.

If a dispute between buyer and seller arises, the standards can then determine who is at fault.

But many federal rules are duplicative, obsolete, unnecessary, conflicting or otherwise inconsistent.

An analysis by the Government Accounting Office found that in fiscal year 2013, \$95 billion of the \$3.6 trillion the federal government spent was duplicative.

For instance, according to the GAO report, there are 76 federal drug abuse and prevention treatment programs, spread among an astounding 17 different agencies.

Combined, they generate 6.1 million hours of paperwork, almost \$300 million in costs, and 122 forms to be filled out by individuals, organizations and businesses.

This is an unacceptable waste of tax money and resources.

The engine of our economy—our small businesses—need room to innovate and expand.

But burdensome and duplicative regulations drain resources from businesses—harming their ability hire new workers and create jobs.

In Illinois' 14th District, business owners tell me this is the chief block to investing and hiring.

When it costs them more than \$10,500 per employee annually to comply with all federal regulations, their concerns make sense.

But in 2012, the Obama administration piled on \$236 billion in new regulations.

It's a little wonder we suffer from weak economic growth and still-too-high unemployment. President Obama has pledged a comprehensive review of existing regulations.

But unfortunately, his administration has actually done little to get rid of regulations currently on the books.

In fact, he's going to be adding many more next year.

According to an American Action Forum report, upcoming regulations from the Obama administration in 2014 could cost the private sector more than \$143 billion.

That's billion with a “b.”